



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food Safety  
and Inspection  
Service

Washington, D.C.  
20250

MAY 2 2002

Dr. Jose Angel Del Valle Molina  
Director General de Salud Animal  
Comision Nacional de Sanidad Agropecuaria (CONASAG)  
Secretaria de Agricultura, Ganaderia, Desarrollo  
Rural, Pesca y Alimentación (SAGARPA)  
Recreo No. 14-11 avo. Piso  
Col. Actipan  
03230 Mexico, D.F.

Dear Dr. Molina:

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) conducted an on-site audit of Mexico's meat and processed poultry inspection systems from November 5-16, 2001. Enclosed is a copy of the final audit report. Comments by Mexico on the draft final audit report have been included as Attachment "G" in the enclosed final audit report.

We appreciate your thorough review of the FSIS audit findings and the corrective actions taken to ensure that meat and processed poultry products exported to the United States meet U.S. import requirements. Regarding your request for Mexican establishments to pay directly the salary of official SAGARPA inspection personnel, FSIS regulations state that the system of meat and/or poultry inspection maintained by any foreign country, with respect to establishments preparing products for export to the United States, must be equivalent with all provisions of the U.S. meat and poultry inspection laws and regulations. Accordingly, U.S. law prohibits salaries of FSIS inspectors to be paid directly by U.S. meat and poultry establishments. Therefore, Mexican establishments paying salaries directly to official SAGARPA inspectors would not be allowed to export their product to the United States. Alternatively, SAGARPA has the option to charge a user fee directly or through a third party for remuneration of salaries of official inspectors. Your current arrangement of having official inspectors' salaries paid by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is an acceptable practice.

If you have any questions regarding the audit or need additional information, please contact me by telephone number at 202-720-3781, by fax at 202-690-4040, or by e-mail at [sally.stratmoen@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:sally.stratmoen@fsis.usda.gov). You may also contact Richard F. Brown by telephone at 202- 690-2679, by fax at 202-690-4719, or by e-mail at [richard.brown@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:richard.brown@fsis.usda.gov).

Sincerely,

/s/ Sally Stratmoen  
Chief, Equivalence Section  
International Policy Staff  
Office of Policy, Program Development  
and Evaluation

Enclosure

cc:

Marco Martinez, Agricultural Counselor, Embassy of Mexico  
William Brant, Minister-Counselor, American Embassy, Mexico City  
Robert Hoff, Area Officer, FAS  
Ronald Hicks, Acting Associate Administrator, FSIS  
John Prucha, ADA/OPPDE/FSIS  
Maritza Colon-Pullano, SAIFS, OPPDE, FSIS  
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Country File - Mexico (Audit FY-April 2002)

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